

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) ~~A~~A method of optical imaging of oesophageal cancer and Barrett's oesophagus of an animate subject involving administering an optical imaging contrast agent to the subject and generating an optical image of at least a part of said subject to which said contrast agent has distributed, wherein said contrast agent ~~with~~has affinity for an abnormally expressed biological target associated with oesophageal cancer or Barrett's oesophagus, said biological target being selected from E-cadherin, CD44, P62/c-myc (HGF receptor), p53 and EGFR/erbB-2.

2. (Currently amended) The method ~~A contrast agent~~ as claimed in claim 1 wherein the contrast agent has a molecular weight is below 14 000 Daltons.

3. (Currently amended) The method ~~A contrast agent~~ as claimed in claim 1, where the contrast agent is of formula I



wherein V is one or more vector moieties having affinity for an abnormally expressed target in oesophageal cancer or Barrett's oesophagus, L is a linker moiety or a bond and R is one or ~~ore~~ more reporter moieties detectable in optical imaging.

4. (Currently amended) The method ~~A contrast agent~~ as claimed in claim 1, where the contrast agent comprises ~~comprising~~ a contrast agent substrate, wherein the target is an abnormally expressed enzyme, such that the contrast agent changes pharmacodynamic properties and/or pharmacokinetic properties upon a chemical modification from a contrast agent substrate to a contrast agent product upon a specific enzymatic transformation.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) The method ~~A contrast agent~~ as claimed in claim 3 wherein V is selected from peptides, peptoid moieties, oligonucleotides, oligosaccharides, fat-related compounds and traditional organic drug-like small molecules.

7. (Currently amended) The method ~~A contrast agent~~ as claimed in claim 3 wherein R is a dye that interacts with light in the wavelength region from the ultraviolet to the near-infrared part of the electromagnetic spectrum.

8. (Currently amended) ~~A pharmaceutical composition for optical imaging of oesophageal cancer and Barrett's oesophagus comprising a~~ The method of claim 1 where the contrast agent as defined in claim 1 is provided as a pharmaceutical composition together with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or excipient.

9 - 10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim ~~10~~ 1 for diagnosis of oesophageal cancer and Barrett's oesophagus, for follow up of the progress of oesophageal cancer and Barrett's oesophagus development, follow up of treatment of oesophageal cancer and Barrett's oesophagus, or in surgical guidance.

12-13. (Cancelled)